Cultural Rhetoric, Generative Anthropology, and Narrative Conflict

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This paper has its initial point of departure in Eric Gans' thoughts on "originary" as opposed to "victimary" rhetoric,(1) in his *Signs of Paradox*, followed by his discussion of the rhetoric of "white guilt" in the series of seven issues of *Chronicles of Love and Resentment*;(2) furthermore, in some notes by Adam Katz on rhetoric against the background of his concept of "firstness," and ultimately resolved in Gans' recently published *A New Way of Thinking*. Gans begins (Chapter 2 of *Signs of Paradox*) by defining the relation between thought and rhetoric as that between earlier and later stages of the originary scene, namely between the dynamic of representation and the dynamic of imitation, thus comparing rhetoric to *sparagmos* (Gans 1997, 34).(3) This enables Katz to speak about the "secondness" of knowing and rhetoric, in order to describe how the minimal hypothesis can work not as reduction but in an inexhaustible manner: "The test of originary method is, in a sense, rhetorical—whether or not it can constitute scenes that are iterations of the originary scene and that are open to everyone" (Katz 2007, 116). However, despite the supposedly secondary nature of rhetoric, in the Chapter 12 of *Signs of Paradox*, Gans finds it possible to place rhetoric at the heart of originary event:

The originary event allows for no neutral vantage point from which the instrumental force of its rhetoric can be perceived. The persuader is as moved by this force as the interlocutor whose difference from himself he seeks to abolish; the former's priority in the use of the sign leaves him with no residual superiority over the latter in the face of the absolute difference accorded by the sign to its central referent. […] Persuasion can only be reduced to a repeatable technique once the rhetorical power of the community, as manifested in ritual, has become an object of reflection drained of its sacred aura, no longer revelatory but instrumental. […] Although the Greeks taught other agonistic arts, rhetoric is the only one that depends on the deliberate reproduction of the critical tension of the originary scene (Gans 1997, 169-170).Then, in the course of his polemic with Derrida in *A New Way of Thinking*

Gans writes:

This sharing of meaning is a mutual “presence” prerequisite to human communication and to the maintenance of the human community. Language does not place *sous rature* the “absolute presence” of the first sign; on the contrary, its system of differences *extends* this presence. Metaphysics’ suspicion of writing’s secondarity with respect to speech indeed reflects an originary intuition, but this intuition, rather than rejecting *différance*, seeks on the contrary to retrieve through detemporalization the originary *différance* that founds the human community. The cure for metaphysics is the retemporalization of its founding myth, not as the rediscovery of originary violence, but as the beginning of the never-ending history of its deferral (Gans 2011, 184).Of course, these short excerpts hardly do justice to the richness of the rhetorical insights of Gans and his followers,(4) but they do reflect a certain uncertainty regarding what rhetoric is: is it the “firstness” of the “sharing of meaning” or the “secondness” of the “iterations of the originary scene that are open to everyone”? Evidently, the relationship between Generative Anthropology (GA) and rhetoric as practice and discipline requires further investigation. However, I will try to cope with the task not in the way of the rhetoric analysis of GA, but merely by originary analysis of (particularly cultural) rhetoric, while focusing especially on its recent developments. In this article I will argue that a new model of rhetoric, more appropriate to the rhetorical warfare of our days, should be developed, based on GA. I will suggest first, following the rhetoricians of the Liege Group μ (Dubois et al. 1981) in a merely personalistic way, that rhetoric functions in culture as a practice of destroying language and reconstructing it, and thus as a spiritual practice of forming and deconstructing the subject, in other words, as the self-formation and self-recognition of the personality.(5)Second, a discussion of the generative-anthropological motives of rhetoric will lead to an examination of its chaotic and autopoetic nature, and this will raise the need for a renewed discussion of the link between rhetoric and violence. For this purpose, the primary fundament of a renewed model of rhetoric will be constructed, based on Gans’ concepts. Third, in the wake of a critical discussion of Juri Lotman’s approach to rhetoric, I will complete this model based on the concept of narrative conflict. And finally, uniting the lines of thought about originary narrative, narrative conflict, and myth creation (mythopoesis),(6) I will conclude my discussion of the violent originary core of recent cultural rhetoric.

What is Cultural Rhetoric?

What is unique about cultural rhetoric? What is it that makes a rhetorical-cultural analysis such as the one made, for example, by Ivo Strecker, Stephen Tyler and their collaborators in their project “Rhetoric and Culture”(7) unique? A rhetorical analysis deals with those figures and tropes intended to engender certain changes

in the listener's consciousness and behavior. A rhetorical-cultural analysis is directed at those figures and tropes which help the culture to cause changes in itself—in its epistemological base and its practical base, in the episteme and in its discursive configurations, in its generative (formative) mechanisms. Thus, such thinkers as Roland Barthes and Michel Foucault engaged in cultural rhetoric, which analysts and technologists of culture and ideology, experts in political rhetoric, etc. also deal with. In such analyses, rhetorical means known from classic rhetoric are transferred to the sphere of cultural rhetoric. If by rhetoric we refer to the means used by the orator to influence his audience, by cultural rhetoric we refer to the rhetorical means used by a cultural agent(8) (party, minister, Parliament, newspaper, playwright, designer, etc.) in order to influence large social groups that are inaccessible to direct interaction, and hence the influence is exerted indirectly, through changes in cultural configurations (a party changes its constitution, a parliament changes a law, a minister launches a reform, a playwright changes his style, a designer sets a fashion, etc.). In sum, the prevailing assumption is that the attempt of one cultural group to influence another cultural group with the aid of rhetorical means is cultural rhetoric. Election propaganda and an advertising campaign are supposedly typical examples of acts of cultural rhetoric.

The Anthropological Motives of Rhetoric as a Spiritual and Cultural Practice

Linguists like the members of the Liege Group μ are the boldest representatives of the conception in the theory of rhetoric which perceives the essence of rhetoric in the destruction of language ("deviance from level zero") and its reconstruction ("reduction to level zero"). But what is the anthropological motive of rhetoric, in this view? We infer that it is love of dangerous, even deadly games,(9) drives of self-destruction (destruction of the language) and of self-establishment (establishment of the language), an attraction to the borderline and the forbidden. We will examine this issue in detail. The key to the issue is an understanding of rhetoric as a special spiritual practice. Its purpose is similar to the purposes of spiritual practices in European or Far Eastern mysticism: to gain a knowledge of the void. Let us take for example a well-known, widespread practice in yoga. The disciple visualizes a certain god, Shiva for example; then he imagines the dance of Shiva or his love (or war) with another god/goddess. Now he imagines the creation of the world by this god. The next stage—visualization of the destruction of this world by the same god. The god dissolves together with the world he created, and then the disciple dissolves and disappears together with the god and the world he created in his imagination. The final goal of this practice is the disappearance of the self together with the disappearance of the universe (through recognition of its unreality).(10)

The spiritual practice of rhetoric works in a similar fashion. First, rhetoric is

invention—the creation of a new *name*. What is done in the East by mental and physical means is done in rhetoric by discourse: it creates an image of the world, a myth that is a name. Rhetoric creates an imagined, artificial world—an illusion—through language. The new name cannot be created without destroying the old name and the subject. In building the new universe, the subject goes outside of himself or reduces himself to naught and creates a different identity for himself in order to reach the other and convince him, namely to create an imagined reality for him, which he (the other person) will perceive as given. The other also disappears in that imagined world. The self becomes other and the other becomes self in this transcendent act. In rhetoric, the result is called participation or agreement. The referent of the language is not the "real" world, namely the one we knew before the rhetorical act, but the new rhetorical world created by this rhetorical act. At this stage, then, in parallel to visualization in the Eastern practice, the self, the other and the world are destroyed, but a new verbal-mythic world is created.

The second stage or dimension of the work of rhetoric is the destruction of the illusory world that rhetoric itself has created. This internal conflict is the deep source of endless intense debates about the essence of rhetoric from Gorgias to Barthes: does rhetoric reveal truth or destroy it?(11) The truth about rhetoric is the very fact that rhetoric destroys itself. It undermines its own authority and power to persuade. The illusion created in the rhetorical act exposes its nullity. This is because every trope and every figure from the outside embodies an element of self-destruction. Every trope is a ticking bomb. A metaphor, for example, is an enormous creative vehicle, but its power is based on destruction of the language and the world. It creates a new reality; however, this reality is not stable but quite volatile. It is, as Juri Lotman would say, "the big cultural bang" (Lotman 2009, 19-24) in miniature. Hence owing to the trait of self-dissolution of rhetorical components, the illusory nature of the rhetorical world exposes and nullifies itself. As soon as the persuasion (the participation, agreement, trust) is born, it already fades and sinks into chaos, in which there is no language, world and subject, but it is the source of all these in the next rhetorical act, thus paving the way to what Kenneth Burke calls "the eternal plea."

Of course, the pragmatics of rhetoric was always important, but was not its major motive and basis. The claim that rhetoric has a utilitarian motive (its use to develop homiletics, to embellish, educate, to control crowds, etc.) is quite limited. It is similar to the claim, for example, that Christian icons were created in order to attract peasants to churches and to impress them. The argument, merely characteristic of the Middle Ages, that the aim of rhetoric is to organize discourse and in general to codify world orders does not stand up to criticism either. Whenever rhetoric filled that role, it became a dust-filled junkyard.

Rhetorical speech is similar to dissipative structure in Ilya Prigogine's chaos theory (Prigogine and Stengers 1997). It is created like order in chaos and it dissipates within the chaos; it is created, coalesces, dissipates, vanishes. This effervescence is the rhetorical act. Those moments in which dissipative structures are created that overshadow the chaos and turn it into background are the moments when rhetoric is invented. If these structures were anticipated and ensured, their appearance would not be called "invention."

The question now is: why are the structures of the rhetorical invention necessarily dissipative? The objective of this trait is clear to us: they have to give the audience the confidence that they are fragile enough so that they can be destroyed. Even the most self-confident speakers, armed with the strongest reasons, must create a sense of instability, a sense of the danger of borderline and transition. They need to do this to create a real dynamic of transition as well as to actually move the listener from one state to another, one *doxa* to another, from one name to another. Even the crudest manipulation embodies a core of instability—the free will of the addressee. Even if from a pragmatic point of view, the addressee cannot disagree, even if everything has already been decided in his place for him, the structure of the communicative event of a rhetorical act will still have the "unstable" character of a potential "threat" of disagreement. Every communicative strategy assumes the possibility that each of its moves can collapse, if it is taken in a rhetorical situation. The potential of dangerous, explosive disagreement of the addressee plays a formative role in rhetoric.

On the social level, rhetoric works with the boundaries of the private and the public.(12) People create rhetorical worlds, observe the rise of dissipative rhetorical structures, and thus witness the formation of the public space, and of understanding and agreement in the society. At the same time, as they observe dissipative structures, people see them collapse, and thus they witness the renewed establishment of the private, personal, non-social space. Rhetoric is, therefore, a type of strategic game in social and personal reality. The players can make moves in one of the stages of the game or play in the entire game until the end and discover its real objective. This game is only partially built on the spread of probabilities; it is mainly based on the decisions of the actual players, on their choice of personal strategies. If the speaker knew in advance what the addressee wants at every given moment, what he is likely to accept or reject, he would know exactly what to say. But the speaker's knowledge is limited, and the addressee, along with the aggregate of his desires, changes every minute. Consequently, the speaker makes choices and decisions, also hesitates and changes, invents and performs rhetorical acts again and again. This actually brings rhetoric closer to ethics, turns it into an ambitious competitor of philosophy. In wavering between the private and the public sphere, the speaker moves back and forth between states of

expression and non-expression. This spiral movement from non-expression to expression and back is the basis of rhetoric as a spiritual technique of experiencing non-expression and, ultimately, non-being (public).

A rhetorical act can thus be depicted as a chaotic (dynamic, non-linear) and autopoietic system,(13) namely as possessing an ability of self-organization and self-formation. This quality turns the rhetorical act into a living system. The activity of this system advances through many points of bifurcation (split, choice) in which it becomes unstable, and its progress takes on a random nature. The purpose of rhetoric is, therefore, to organize social-discursive acts as a living system. It does not suffice to say that the purpose of rhetoric is to change the consciousness or behavior of people; we need to add the direction of this change—the survival, replication and development of human (or humanistic-religious, as perceived by Burke) forms of life. For this purpose, rhetoric necessarily also serves as a way of recognizing life. And since rhetorical activity exists through the system vis-à-vis itself, it can be defined as self-organizing, self-recognizing and self-developing. Self recognition characterizes the rhetorical system as autopoietic. In rhetoric, the main motive of cultural action is revealed—self-protection and reproduction by means of organization and self-creation. But if the culture was only organization, it would very quickly cease developing. Hence, culture is in essence a chaotic system, in Lotman's terms (Lotman 2009), and hence it is not frozen in entropy nor does it become a structure of mathematical or discursive formulae, a dusty storeroom of tropes and topoi. This inexhaustible nature of rhetoric as the living, autopoietic system is based on the inexhaustibility, as Adam Katz wrote (Katz 2007, 101), of the "minimal hypothesis" proclaimed by GA.

Rhetoric and Generative Anthropology

We have discussed above the anthropological motive and function of rhetoric. Now we will go on to discuss its anthropological roots with the aid of GA. As mentioned, as far as we are concerned, rhetoric is a spiritual practice of breaking down the language. This assumption enables us to turn to theories of the formation of culture by (deferral) of violence, because it defines the source of the discursive practice in terms of violence. I am taking the liberty of quoting a rather long section from one of Gans' books, in which he presents the main points of his conception:

The originary hypothesis affirms that humanity and its institutions are most parsimoniously described as originating in a singular event. When the mimetic conflicts generated by the lability of protohuman appetite can no longer be contained by the pecking-order arrangements of protohuman social structure, a new means is needed for preventing the breakdown of the social order. This means is representation, and the first representation is that of the sacred. To represent is

to defer mimetic violence until it can be focused on the shared destruction and consumption of the material center, while preserving the ideal or spiritual center from which meaning and with it, the human, emerge. In this generative scenario, the desire-object at the center becomes the victim of appetitive violence; what we call God is what subsists in the aftermath of this violence as the indestructible because transcendental source of the meaning of the sign that designates the center. The first sign is the name-of-God; re-presenting the material center of desire gives it the meaning of the subsistent center of the scene of representation, thereby undecidably discovering and inventing its significance. Hence there is a non-mystical sense in which, since all words derive from the representation of a central object of desire, every word is a name of God (Gans 2008, 177-179).In the rhetorical act, language breaks down. The object of violence in rhetoric is a sign. From the standpoint of generative anthropology, then, the rhetorical act is in the second stage of the origination of the language. The first stage was the originary scene, in which the sign was created indicating the abortive appropriation of the object of desire. Now the mimetic desire and the violence are directed at the sign. The aim of this violence, in the case of rhetoric, is the creation of a state of choice for the subject. A rhetorical act undermines the self-identity of the language in order to create dual identities and conditions of truly free choice. Rhetoric creates a double language, a double myth, and a double world. “Ordinary” and “non-rhetorical” language is merely a movement along one myth. But the listener can be given a choice between two myths, two languages can be created; the language can split into two. All the tropes serve this goal. The aim is to liberate the listener from the language, to take him beyond its boundaries. When he goes out of the language, the listener is supposed to find himself face to face with the identities, which in this case are only personalities prior to the creation of the myth. So that the listener can be face to face with these personalities, between which he is going to choose himself, his position and identity, the language must be put in parentheses, must be rejected. The breakdown we spoke of is in fact deferral or suspension. That is what makes possible a direct, unmediated confrontation with the personalities of choice.

In this way, the listener again finds himself in a state of conflict: two contradictory forces operate on him, two strategies are available to him, two modes of thought, embodied in the two identities. The listener returns to the originating conflict, the one that precedes the signs and generates them. In the rhetorical act, the listener returns to the originary, pre-linguistic event, in which the encounter with the other is not yet mediated. A truly free choice is the choice prior to the language, even if this “prior” is only an imagined hypothetical scene. The face-to-face event lasts only a very short time (relative to the duration of the entire rhetorical act); it is very unstable. As soon as he makes his choice, the listener sinks into one of the myths. What is happening is mythopoesis. The mythopoesis stops when the listener stops it

and designates: This is the myth, this is the sign! This statement signals the return of the language.

An obvious example of this mechanism is President Obama's campaign slogan "Yes, we can!". The audience is provided with a new, highly potent future identity and invited to create a new myth of itself to replace the previous identity and myth. But the main point is that in order to choose a new identity and create a new myth, a listener must return to the originary scene of his love for himself and resentment at his impotence in order to realize this love. This demagogic mirror of narcissism, being placed in front of the listener, ruins the language in which it is engraved, for a short moment eliminates the discourse itself, and turns the personality into the wordless, but energetic and irresistible, image of itself.

Another, more elegant, example would be a passage on Isaac Babel from Cynthia Ozick's *Fame and Folly*: "Whether or not Babel's travels with the Cossacks—and with Bolshevism altogether—deserve to be termed heroic, he was anything but blind. He saw, he saw, and he saw" (Ozick, 145). Ozick's sermon moves through a chain of images to the main point of persuasion: "Bolshevism was lethal in its very cradle" (ibid., 146). The persuasiveness of this idea, discursive and ideological by itself, is based, however, on the witnessing power of seeing: He saw, he saw, and he saw. Ozick's argument is: irrespective of the sincerity or otherwise of Babel's speech, of which his narrative consists, and which always remains in its "secondness," his originating seeing of violence, possessing authentic pre-lingual "firstness," is ultimately truthful. The rhetorical refrain "He saw, he saw, and he saw" breaks down the language in order to create Babel's personality and myth of witness, and to cause the reader to identify with it in the originary scene of witnessing the violence.

To sum up, the active stage of the origination of the personality in a rhetorical act is a stage of the conflict that continues until the moment of choice-identification, when the listener claims, in the form of, in Gans' terms, designative ostensive:(14) "This!," "This is mine!," "This is I!," "This is my (new, proper) name!"(15) The gesture of this designation turns the personality into the object of the designation, namely a myth, and at that moment the language returns. But the language never returns to "itself," as it was before the rhetorical act. It is a new language, or the language of the new myth, a new sign; it is "re-figuration" of the world, in the terms of Ricoeur's mimesis (Ricoeur 1984, 70 ff.). The rhetorical act moves from the existing sign back to the originary scene, and forward to the new sign. The personality disappears again behind the new language, until the next rhetorical act.

A Topos from the Standpoint of Generative Anthropology

A topos is a common place, which does not belong to anyone and at the same time belongs to everyone. This means that the topos is the most non-personalistic place in the entire sphere of rhetoric. It can be accepted by every one of the participants in the rhetorical act. Nonetheless, a topos constitutes a basis for invention. Every rhetorical invention emerges from a topos, since it defines the boundaries of the agreement. However, to the extent that the speaker aspires to achieve agreement elsewhere, outside of the topos, he is forced to cross the boundary and establish a new place of new agreement (or disagreement, thus provoking resentment). An invention is in fact the invention of the personality, of myth—mythopoesis.

For example, when the head of Hamas, Khaled Mashal, says that "Hamas rejects any attempt to settle Palestinians in other countries, in particular in Jordan. Jordan should remain Jordan, Palestine—Palestine,"(16) he ostensibly just uses the topos of identification (based on the ostensive) in its extreme form—tautology. However, in fact, he invents, first, the equation between the legal and political status of the two—Jordan and Palestine, and second, the distinction between the population of Jordan and the population of Palestine,(17) thus inventing the distinct personality of the Palestinian people.

Hence the question: how can the most non-personalistic place in rhetoric (topos) serve as a basis for invention of the personality (perhaps the most personalistic place in rhetoric)? Apparently, a fundamental trait of rhetoric derives from this paradoxical affinity, and we need to analyze and understand it.(18)

From the standpoint of generative anthropology, rhetoric works with signs, namely with the stage that follows the originary event. Rhetoric, including both the speaker and the listener, receives the topos from without; for rhetoric, it is the given. In a certain sense, a topos is transcendent to rhetoric, just as the language itself can be transcendent, as Eric Gans asserts. The speaker and the listener, then, receive the topos as an existing sign. Invention is a regression from a sign to a personality. From the viewpoint of generative anthropology, the regression takes the form of a second stage of the cycle of the origination of culture, the stage in which the violence is directed at the sign. Putatively, in the case of rhetoric, we should speak about the violence directed at the topos, about a certain type of violence—the appropriation of the topos by the speaker. However, in actual fact, the situation is more complex. The gesture of appropriation directed at the sign is arrested when a new sign is born. The act of invention is, in Gans' terms, the abortive gesture of the appropriation of the topos. In his failed attempt to appropriate the topos, the speaker creates a new sign, because the topos cannot be appropriated based on its definition and its transcendental nature. A topos cannot be appropriated, but

anyone who speaks must try to appropriate it and pay the price for that in the invention/performance of the new identity, of the new name.

This is apparently the nature of the transition from topos to invention: the topos is not utilized, not appropriated and not given as a gift, but rather nullified, removed. In this act, the speaker supposedly returns, together with the sign, to its "source"—to the pre-linguistic personality, or to be more precise, the sign-as-name becomes a personality in its own myth, it becomes an identity that opens itself to the listener as the possible object that is pointed to. This identity will again become a sign as soon as it is chosen by the listener in his gesture. Thus, in the example mentioned above, the topos of tautology is nullified, because in the newly invented myth, the same is not the same anymore, due to the creation of a new personality—*the* Palestinian People. Another example: Dostoevsky's well-known statement, "Beauty will save the world" (*The Idiot*), based on the eschatological, temporal (of the arrow of time) topos, takes the reader back to the personality of the Savior, tries to appropriate it, and to cause an oscillation between Him and the figure of Beauty. Since the appropriation of the personality (the Name) succeeds, but the appropriation of the topos cannot succeed, the identification of the Savior with the newly created personality of Beauty replaces or cancels the need for Salvation, thus emptying the topos of the time arrow of its meaning.

To sum up, if a sign is a gesture of pointing to the personality that is chosen, the power of rhetoric lies in its ability to restore the pointer to the last moment of hesitation before he points, to the moment of originating the gesture, to allow him to make a new choice. Rhetoric puts the world created in the gesture in parentheses in order to recreate it. It leads man to pure personalistic existence, to presence without (common) place, to utopia.

Rhetoric and Violence

On the one hand, rhetoric is not violent nor does it exist in conditions of violence. On the other hand, rhetoric seems to be emerging from violence and preserving the violence within its genetic core.(19) Eric Gans' generative model shows the direction for resolving this difficulty: rhetoric is intended to block and process the violence, and hence it must always remain at the heart of the conflict and waver between violence towards a personality and violence towards the sign. In any event, this difficulty has to be clarified.

There is no such thing as violent rhetoric and non-violent rhetoric. All rhetoric is non-violent, but it is also always "violent." Every figure or trope takes over the listener's imagination. A strong image captures the consciousness at least for a limited period of time, and no rational reason, argument, claim, explanation or

analysis is capable of overcoming it. Let us take an example. During the military operation against the Hamas in Gaza, known as “Cast Lead,” in January 2009, and during several years of a siege of Gaza that preceded and followed the operation, a slogan was going around that can be summed up as follows: “Israel has turned Gaza into a concentration camp.” An image like that draws its power from sources of emotion, memory, language, a personal and collective subconscious, dominant epistemes, cultural archives, canon, stereotypes, conventions, prejudices. All reason is weak in the face of these enormously strong mechanisms.

Rhetoric is hypnotic, the image is its gesture of appropriation, and the here-and-now of the present is the victim of its violence. If rhetoric would only appropriate the object of the speech or the topos, they could be rescued, reconquered, restored. But it appropriates and destroys what cannot be restored—the present of speech and of recognition. The image appears as a gesture by a cruel, accusing finger, which fills the entire horizon, concealing every event. What comes after it cannot be anything other than a desperate attempt at justification, a hopeless self-defense; everything will be like the last words of someone doomed to die.

The image paralyzes and silences the language in order to return the listener to the utopia of the originary scene. There, on the stage of the hypothetical past, man sees himself at the height of the conflict, making his gesture of desire. In its amazing spectacle, its skillful illusion, rhetoric transfers the blame for the violence from itself to the listener and to the object of the violence, from the present to the past. It is impossible to say that rhetoric lies: the event in the past “was,” always “was.” What one can say is that there is no essential rational connection between the originary event in the past and the object of the speech in the present. However, any statement, including the previous sentence, is as naught compared to the image of tragedy.

If so, we can sum up rhetoric’s mechanism of violence with the following diagram:

The speaker creates an image >> The image resurrects a violent originary event >> The listener identifies with one of the subjects of the event and takes responsibility for the violence (as a victim or executioner) >> The responsibility cancels out the present and suspends the language >> Any rational reasoning is blocked and fails.

At the center of this chain of actions the listener identifies with the past, with the other, and puts on the mask of the strange identity. That is the ethical focus of rhetoric, the place of free choice. Hence it is also the weak link in the chain; only through it is it possible to damage the action of the rhetorical image. This damage means denial of the tradition, cultural blindness, forgetting. That is the price the

listener may have to pay for resisting the power of the image, for his disagreement with the speaker, his victory in the argument. Another price is emotional imperviousness. Not many are prepared to pay that price, so the image is dominant, and the problem of rhetoric, the kind that not only leads to agreement but also enables disagreement, is at the core of every linguistic and semiotic event. This is why Hamlet's ghost's rhetorical act ends with the command to remember ("remember me"—act 1, scene 5), and when Hamlet completely identifies with his father in death, thus ultimately fulfilling the obligation, speech is suspended: "The rest is silence" (act 5, scene 2).

In this case, can we still talk about persuasion and not about "submission"? Does such an image really leave the listener free choice? All of rhetoric is on the thin line of separation between convincing and succumbing. This separation is not ensured, not granted, but is bought by the listener at the price of cooperation. Although the power of images such as those we gave here as examples is invincible, the speaker who uses them may lose the war, even if he wins the battle. The problem stems from the "topography" of this sort of image, in its legislating its place, or even one can say in its place of legislation. In principle, the rhetorical image ought to legislate, engrave the boundaries of the common place—of the topos. If the topos is not binding (legal)—Hamlet's "I am *bound* to hear" (act 1, scene 5)—it is neither valid nor effective. If the topos is not the place of the law—the sacred center of the discourse—it cannot serve as a forum for cooperation and agreement. The problem of the traumatic image is its place on the periphery, or more precisely, in the compulsive oscillation between center and periphery. In order to accept his image, the listener should go out of the center, out of himself, adopt the observation point of the other, to pass to the unlegal/unlegislated place. That is a place of revolution, destruction, violence, war; it is not a place of solidarity and creation. Hence an image like that is in fact a rhetorical failure. Despite their supposedly self-evident availability, in times of war and revolution, the images like that of Gaza as concentration camp cannot nor are they intended to establish agreement. They generally cause the sides to entrench themselves in their positions, duplicating and multiplying the violence and increasing hostility. That is schizophrenic rhetoric that incites a quarrel between a man and himself in order to paralyze and silence him, and thus to remove him from the discourse, not in order to gain his agreement. That is terroristic rhetoric (not only the rhetoric of terrorism), in keeping with the Marxist-Leninist tradition of persuasion through intimidation: if you do not join in the violence, the violence will be turned against you.

However, rhetoric of this type also has a "positive" goal. If it cannot or does not intend to persuade its adversary that the idea is the right one, then it can capture public opinion—the constant third (vanished or present) side of the rhetorical act, which observes from the sidelines and is silent, not meant to make decisions or

accept responsibility. It is the one in whose name or for whose sake the argument supposedly is conducted, the one whose favorable attitude will decide the outcome. Speech intended to satisfy public opinion and gain its favor at the expense of reasoning and persuasion is called demagogy. Even when two adversaries argue with only one another, the speaker is apt to fall into the trap of demagogy in front of the imagined inner audience that exists in him, out of the desire to satisfy himself, to gain a moment of self-sympathy, self-affirmation/gratification. This narcissistic rhetoric can be called auto-demagogy. For example, Dostoevsky's well-known "Double"—the "double thoughts" (*The Idiot*), "the ideal of the Madonna and the ideal of Sodom" (*The Brothers Karamazov*)—which was defined by Mikhail Bakhtin as an ambivalent character, and mistakenly identified by him as carnival and, even more mistakenly, as dialogue, is no more than a typical narcissistic auto-demagogue. In contrast to the true choosing between two really different possibilities in Hamlet's "To be or not to be," there is nothing of dialogue in this self-reflexive oscillation between two different (high and low) ideas or personalities (myths) that struggle for the agreement and benevolence of the third—the observing subject.

What is the source of this narcissistic-demagogic need? There are two: a) infantilism, the inability to pass through the stage of the mirror (in the concept of Jacques Lacan) and establish the real other; b) a lack of confidence, a dearth of authoritativeness, hesitation, a weak self-image, an undefined identity. A demagogue has no identity (myth) of his own to offer his adversary as a choice. He also does not have, for one reason or another, the ability to create a new identity, the ability of rhetorical invention. The sole behavioral pattern available to him is the narcissistic mirror, and hence he can only adopt a strong identity that already exists in the consciousness of the audience and place it as a mirror for himself and the audience. In this move, there is no danger, just as there is no real free choice. In this mimetic triangle, apparent in the "Yes, we can!" example above, the audience points to its own identity, because it sees itself in the mirror pointing to its own identity. Quite economical. The outcome—stagnation and atrophy, which is the absolute opposite of the aims of cultural rhetoric as formulated at the beginning of our discussion. Therefore, a new model of rhetoric must be developed, one that takes into account its power of originating violence, as discussed above.

The Rhetoric Model of Juri Lotman: A Critical Examination

Why do we need another model of rhetoric? In any case, it is a long way from the theoretical models, even the best, such as those of Kenneth Burke and Chaim Perelman, and their practical application. What can we do, if we do not want to conduct an endless and aimless dialogue for the sake of dialogue in the Rorty style,(20) and are unable to conduct a rational Habermas-type polemic? The only

thing that can justify the development of a rhetorical model is the changing reality. And the world is indeed changing before our eyes, and I want to focus on only one corner of that world—the conduct and solution of violent conflicts, and in particular on one aspect of this sphere—a narrative conflict.

The science of war in our time is undergoing a radical change. As we all know, besides the battles there are high technologies, psychological warfare, and also public relations and narrative warfare. Rhetoric skips over the fences of diplomacy and enters spheres that until recently were controlled by the gun and the sword. For example, terrorists and various types of resistance groups invent an abundance of provocative stories (which surely would not meet Habermas' claims of validity)(21) and through them conduct narrative conflicts, which are neither diplomacy nor politics, nor are they physical violence, but they succeed in very effectively advancing their war aims. They succeed in persuading, moving others to cooperate and join in action. These stories are not an ideology; they are not connected to the ruling institutions, but they are also not opposed to them. They create their own battlefield, and their maps cannot be read by rhetoric or by neo-rhetoric. Narrative conflict seems to belong to ideological rather than historical discourse, being a weapon of political rather than academic struggle. For example, among the narratives of Holocaust deniers, the most typical is the narrative of the so-called *Nakba* (catastrophe, in Arabic)—the mass flight of the Arabs because of the war declared by the Arab states on the newly-proclaimed State of Israel in 1948—presented as the Palestinian Holocaust or Catastrophe.(22) It is known that these events cannot be compared by any measure to the Holocaust of European Jewry; however, a narrative conflict, appealing mostly to emotions, is not about the facts but merely about the names. Appropriation of the name involves the appropriation of the status of victim and thus originates the victimary rhetoric.

In order to draw closer to the formulation of a rhetoric theory that is more appropriate to the new reality, we will first turn to the model of rhetoric built by Juri Lotman in his book *Universe of the Mind: A Semiotic Theory of Culture,* in the chapter "Rhetoric as a mechanism for meaning-generation." He writes there: "A pair of mutually non-juxtaposable signifying elements, between which, thanks to the context they share, a relationship of adequacy is established, forms a semantic trope. Tropes are not, therefore, external ornaments, something applied to a thought from the outside—they constitute the essence of creative thinking, and their function extends beyond art. They are inherent in all creativity" (Lotman 2001, 37). Further on, Lotman explains the nature of these elements and the nature of the adequacy created between them: "A trope, therefore, is not an embellishment merely on the level of expression, a decoration on an invariant content, but is a mechanism for constructing a content which could not be constructed by one language alone. A trope is a figure born at the point of contact between two

languages, and its structure is therefore identical to that of the creative consciousness itself" (Lotman 2001, 44). Lotman rapidly moves from the structure of the trope to rhetoric in general, and the mechanism, which Lotman has just discovered, closes on itself: "Rhetorical organization is produced in the field of semantic tension between 'organic' and 'foreign' structures, and its elements can thus be doubly interpreted. The 'foreign' element, even when mechanically introduced into a new structural context, ceases to be equivalent to itself and becomes a sign or an imitation of itself" (Lotman 2001, 50). Lotman uses the concept "mutual untranslatability" to define the relationship between the two languages or the two organizations that construct the trope and rhetoric in general, namely the impossibility of translating, mediating, moving back and forth from one to the other.

A critical discussion of this model will lead us to a new understanding of the mechanism of rhetoric.

1) Lotman's approach is too formal, lacking any functional insight. It refers to the phenomenon of the untranslatability of various languages, but says nothing about the role of this phenomenon. It says nothing about persuasion, and as a result, rhetoric is not differentiated from poetics or any other phenomenon of heterogeneity, of absurd and paradoxical combinations, etc., which do not necessarily reveal a rhetorical character. And in general, the placement of untranslatable elements next to one another does not always and does not necessarily call for translation, and even if it does, that does not necessarily signify the establishment of rhetoric. And now the second point of criticism.

2) A specific character of the relations between untranslatable elements is derived from the mere fact of mutual untranslatability. This character can be different. On the one extreme—absolute alienation, when one element does not even turn to the other, does not call for translation, is isolated in total autonomy. On the other extreme—a relationship of type and category, part and whole, detail and generality, namely, when one is not perceived without the other, or when one is only a different expression of the other (when the means of expression of the one are not translatable to the means of expression of the other).

3) Lotman takes rhetoric outside the boundaries of language and moves it to the level of the text. On the one hand, rhetoric is presented as a mechanism that creates meaning, when we have very small semantic elements such as phrases, and in this case we cannot speak about the level of the text, namely, this mechanism of meaning-creation already operates on a very low level (even on the lowest level, such as phonemes, as the members of the Liege Group μ showed). On the other hand, Lotman is forced to move to the textual level, because he has to

lead the discussion to a level on which it is possible to speak about untranslatable languages. When speaking of language, he has to speak about grammar and syntax, and hence the transition to the higher level is unavoidable. However, this high level, the textual level, is characterized by certain functionality, different from that of the lower levels.

4) It turns out, then, that both on the low and high levels untranslatability does not serve any purpose other than creating the effect of untranslatability, and it only attests to itself. As Lotman himself says, signs appear as witnesses that they are signs. The function of signs in rhetoric, then, is no different than the function of signs in poetics or in any other discourse.

We shall now see how to positively resolve these problems. First of all, we will replace the negative concept of untranslatability with the positive concept of *conflict.* In doing so, we immediately define the character of untranslatability, the character of the relationship between its various components, and also expose a dynamic-temporary dimension of occurrence in it. In reply to the question, on what level does the conflict occur—the level of the language or the level of the text—we give the following solution: the conflict occurs on both levels since it establishes a generative relation between them. In other words, the source of the conflict, the motive, its genome, is the struggle over the appropriation of the word-name on the linguistic level, while the conflict itself takes place and develops on higher levels, in the form of a struggle between the various realizations of the word-name, i.e., between different myths or narratives. If so, then that untranslatability that Lotman talks about and which, in his view, is the source of rhetoric, must be narrowly defined as *a narrative conflict*.

This relationship also explains the mutual attraction of the two untranslatable elements, and the need for translation. A conflict is in itself already a partnership. The requirement for translation appears because different elements begin to seek a solution to the conflict. Translation seems on the horizon to be a solution to the narrative conflict.

Moreover, the concept of conflict introduces functional orientation into the game. The conflict has a pragmatic meaning: every side tries to appropriate the name in order to create a more persuasive narrative, namely, one that will cause the audience to believe in it and identify with it in opposition to another competing narrative. Each side encourages the audience to choose one of the suggested myths. This pragmatic orientation to a defined choice is the rhetorical persuasion. It is what separates a narrative conflict from other types of untranslatability, and first of all from poetic untranslatability. Poetics lacks this functional-pragmatic orientation for the choice of a narrative. Non-adequacy, poetic untranslatability, and

poetic conflicts do not stem from the practical need to appropriate the name (on the linguistic level) and to develop the name(23) (on the textual level). It seems we can mark a clear boundary of the rhetorical manner of language appropriation, as disparate from the poetic manner. For instance, the rhetorical, persuasive efficiency of Francis Bacon's or Thomas Hobbes' famous aphorism "Scientia potentia est" (knowledge is power) lies not in the poetic (metaphoric, in particular) juxtaposition of two untranslatable languages— spiritual and physical, but in the invention of the modern narrative of force and movement as opposed to the ancient narrative of substance, in creating or expressing the conflict between the two narratives, and involving the audience in this conflict.

The model we propose overcomes Lotman's formalism, also in the way that it endows his static model with a temporal, dynamic dimension. Untranslatability in itself definitely does not assume temporality. Conflict, on the other hand, requires time to develop, to move between various phases of struggle and appropriation. This is not only because of the physical, "organic" duration of the gesture of appropriation, but primarily because of the temporal nature of developing the name—the myth. After all, it is the realization of the personality in history. The historical essence of narrative is that it is not reduced only to the organics of consecutively adding one word to another. All narrative actions, including a narrative conflict, require time and establish temporality. On the ethical-pragmatic plane as well, a rhetorical act requires time because both the persuasion of the speaker and the audience's decision-making require time. The presentation of the myths for a choice, the oscillation and the choice itself take time. Lotman's model totally overlooks this requirement. Now, with a precise understanding of the conflictual infrastructure of rhetoric, we can continue constructing the adequate model.

Towards the Dynamic Model

In what way does narrative conflict differ from dialectics, discussion, sentence, instruction, argument, reasoning? What is the advantage of its terminology? The concept of narrative conflict defines the originary scene, the "pre" stage of a rhetorical act: the stage of creating the distance, in the terms of Kenneth Burke,(24) in relation to the adversary, on the one hand, and on the other, it is the stage of ingratiating behavior towards the "third audience," the one that putatively is not a party to the conflict, but whose sympathy and affinity are important to both sides in achieving their goals. In other words, narrative conflict has the structure of demagogy. But lest we err: as such, it constitutes only an initial, albeit formative, stage in the overall act, which is absolutely defined as a true rhetorical act. We need to understand the essence of narrative conflict and its resolution, if we want to understand this rhetorical act. It seems that "narrative identification"(25) is such a

problematic and uncertain stage because the narrative as such emerges from conflict and preserves it in its signs, as Eric Gans has already shown (Gans 1997/1998). On the other hand, somewhat mysteriously, the narrative also contains the secret of the resolution of its conflictuality.

Kenneth Burke discovered the relevance of the concept of myth to rhetorical theory, and described the myth as the "rhetorical reinforcement of ideas" (Burke 1953, 15-20, 203-208), but his approach is limited to a closed, harmonistic, and abstract understanding of the myth. The unifying iconicity of the myth is not its major or essential trait. Myth is concrete and unique, and hence it is forced to struggle against many other myths in the narrative arena of culture. Therefore, we can merge the conceptions of rhetoric discussed above into one model to show that *rhetoric is an effort directed at resolving a narrative conflict, which was consciously re-originated by means of a mechanism of mythopoesis (the creation of myths).* The process unfolds in four stages. Let us take as our example Einstein's "God does not play dice with the universe":

1) The first stage of the rhetorical act is the creation of the myth (defined, following Alexei Losev, as the story of a personality that realizes its transcendental purpose in empirical history, or in Losev's succinct definition—as a developed magic name). At this stage, the personality created in speech is absolutely identical to its name, a word identical to meaning. (God is realized in the name of God.)

2) This leads to the next stage—to the narrative conflict, namely a conflict between two myths: the old myth, in which the audience believes, and the new myth, suggested by the speaker. A name (meaning) becomes an object of violence. (Two narratives or images struggle on our mind: "God plays dice" and "God does not play dice.")

3) The following, third stage stems from the mechanism described by Gans: the violence is blocked and the conflict is frozen. This happens owing to the renewed separation between personality and name, between word and meaning. This breaks the language down, creates a deviation from the direct meaning of words, and thus rhetoric is created. (The narratives are being separated from the meaning: it is not about the image of playing God, but about the idea of the universe as cosmos as opposed to the idea of the universe as chaos.)

4) The blocking of the violence makes it possible to lead the audience to the fourth and last stage of this model: a free choice of one of the two identities created in the two myths. The listener chooses an identity and regards it as his realization, and hence this stage is conducted again by the forces of mythopoesis, only this time the originating and realization of the personality bring about the resolution of the

narrative conflict. (I choose the idea of, for instance, chaos, and therefore I reject the proposed new myth, thus deferring the violence between two myths, identifying with the image of God playing dice, finally realizing anew His personality in a non-conflictual way.)

To clarify this process, let us go back to Losev's theory of myth, and emphasize again that he defines a miracle as the realization of the transcendental purpose of the personality in empirical history. If so, the creation of the myth is the becoming of the personality in words, or to put it differently, the invention of the name. It is the beginning and foundation of rhetoric. However, as soon as the name takes on existence in public scene, its unity with the mythic personality is undermined, and it becomes the object of the mimetic desire of other players in the public arena. Losev's theory helps us understand the unique value of the myth; it does not derive from its power to explain or justify natural and linguistic phenomena; that is a secondary purpose. The value of the myth lies in the becoming of the personality, in the miracle of the embodiment of the transcendental in the empirical. In this situation, the personality has "exclusive ownership" of the name. Moreover, a personality is realized in its appropriation of the name, as if it belongs to it and only to it, and as if it realizes and represents only it. At this stage, violence does not exist yet, because the concept of violence does not exist. However, as soon as the process of the becoming of the personality (the creation of the myth) is observed/heard from the side by others, they perceive the appropriation of the name as violence (for example, the myth of playing God turns out to be, or to seem to be, an appropriative, violent image, and thus turns into the object of problematization, i.e. of a violent attempt at re-appropriation). The reason for this, of course, is the awakening of mimetic desire. The others fight for their right to invent/appropriate a name, for their "firstness," as it is applied by Adam Katz to GA.(26) This right is identified with the right to be realized and to exist, and thus they view it as justified and well-grounded. This right and the myth itself are no longer perceived as negotiable objects. It is here that the conflict begins. When the appropriation of the name is viewed as violence, the entry of other players into the arena is paradoxically perceived as an act that balances, restrains and blocks the appropriation and prevents the violence. If in the first stage the symbol was, in Losev's terms, an organism, the living unity of the personality and the name, in the second stage the symbol is an object of exchange between the sides. But the exchange is not yet a discussion or a compromise: in the narrative conflict there is no compromise, because every myth, every name, every personality is unique and hence non-communicative in principle. In this way, Soviet ideologists appropriated the Western word "peace" not only because it successfully disguised their revolutionary military plans, but also because they could not allow their opponents to use this powerful word unilaterally; they were uncompromising in their intention to make this word *theirs*. So, every Soviet man knew that the true desire for "peace

in the entire world” belonged only to the Soviet people. This rhetoric (demagogy) was motivated by the logic of warfare: you cannot effectively fight if you do not have at least the same weapon that your enemy has.

The Levels of Narrative Conflict

I conclude this study with a proposed primary typology of narrative conflict. It is possible to talk about a narrative conflict on four levels:

1. A conflict that is represented by narrative means, namely a story about a (narrative) conflict;
2. A conflict between two or more contradictory or opposing narratives;
3. A conflict within one narrative, an internal contradiction in the story that turns one narrative into two (or more);
4. A conflict in relation to the narrative, a struggle over its content, over its affiliation or its appropriation.

In rhetoric, each of these conflicts is very deliberately and consciously established, motivated and conducted, and in this case one cannot speak about an error or misunderstanding. It is a war. Modern rhetorical warfare is a distinct example of a narrative conflict. All four types of conflict appear in it at one and the same time, out of a desire to overcome the destructive conflictual power to the greatest extent possible. This works in the following way: (1) One of the sides in the warfare (let us call him “the fighter”) creates a narrative on his conflict with the other side; (2) he confronts his adversary with an/other narrative/s, usually those that he himself creates and attributes to the enemy; (3) in each of the confronting, conflicting narratives, the fighter structures an internal contradiction that is meant to prevent a rational, well-reasoned solution of the conflict, and to turn it into a permanently unsolvable problem; (4) in doing so the fighter moves the conflict from the represented plane (“the reality”) to the representative plane, namely to the narrative itself, turning the war into struggles over the appropriation of the names, narratives, and the definition of their contents.(27)

The aim of this war is not to block violence, nor to reject it but rather to perpetuate it—in two senses: to make it permanent and to document it, engrave it on the cultural memory. Both of these motives support one another. Permanence calls for consecutiveness, and the latter demands collection/production, accumulation and transmission of information, which calls for documentation and the creation of archives. The narrative is the document of the conflict, namely of itself. On the other hand, documentation requires constant attention, interested observation, which is acquired by means of imbuing the conflict with a permanently unsolvable character. I fight, therefore I tell; I tell, therefore I fight. The circle is closed.

Narrative conflict is thus a method of establishing and conducting conflicts.

Conclusion

One can therefore sum it all up by saying that all rhetoric is cultural rhetoric, since all rhetoric is based on the anthropological element of the emergence of culture from violence, on a complex (chaotic and essentially autopoetic) system of generating, appropriating and destroying the name. From a more specific observation point, cultural rhetoric, in particular that which characterizes the contemporary culture of rhetorical warfare, emerges as the establishment of narrative conflicts and as recurrent attempts to resolve them, to re-establish and perpetuate them.

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Notes

1. This distinction paves the way to the juxtaposition of Gans' Generative Anthropology and Kenneth Burke's cultural-anthropological theory, which has been probed by the students of GA, but never reached the specifically rhetorical realm. See: Mishler 1999, Oort 2007. Although it is close to GA (more than Rene Girard's theory is, as Oort notes), Burke's rhetoric supposedly belongs to the "victimary" type. More detail comparison can be found in Mishler's paper, which intentionally avoids, however, any reference to Burke's rhetoric. (back)

2. "White guilt is the guilt of the unmarked toward the marked" (Gans 2004). See: "White Guilt" I-VI and "Ending White Gult," *Chronicles* no. 310, 311, 313, 316, 320, 323, 337 (2004-2006). (back)

3. In his *Chronicles of Love and Resentment* no. 130 (March 28, 1998) Gans writes: "Turning the tables on unexamined certitudes like 'phallogocentrism' is the very soul of rhetoric, the 'art of persuasion,' which functions by arousing our resentment

against what it presents as a heretofore unchallenged usurpation of central authority." Compare this notion with Michel Foucault's conception of "fearless speech"—parrhesia—as revolt against authority: "In parrhesia, the speaker uses his freedom and chooses frankness instead of persuasion, truth instead of falsehood or silence, the risk of death instead of life and security, criticism instead of flattery, and moral duty instead of self-interest and moral apathy" (Foucault 2001, 19-20). Foucault seeks for problematization of the rhetoric, but in fact just emphasizes its very essence, its conflictual and victimary/originary character. (back)

4. For application of the concept of victimary, mastery, or heroic rhetoric to esthetic-poetic analysis see, for example, the works by Ian Dennis on Byron (and others) (Dennis 2007 and 2009), followed by the work by Emma Peacocke, on how Byron "subverted the rhetoric of victimhood and suffering" (Peacocke 2010). See also Andrew Bartlett's study on Frankenstein (Bartlett 2006/2007, Spring/Summer 2007, Fall 2007, 2007/2008). (back)

5. I will not discuss here the problem of the concept of personality in GA, but I agree with Andrew Bartlett that this problem deserves special investigation (Bartlett 2011). (back)

6. I define myth, following Alexei Losev, as a miraculous personalistic history transmitted in words, where miracle is a realization of a personality's transcendental purpose in empirical history (Losev 2003, 185-186). (back)

7. The project stemmed from the early works of Stephen Tyler (Tyler 1978) and Ivo Strecker (Strecker 1988). Their efforts to establish "a school of the study of culture based on rhetoric and the study of rhetoric based on culture" gave rise to a series of publications, the most exhaustive and programmatic of which is Strecker and Tyler, eds. 2009. (back)

8. "Agent" and "agency" of a rhetorical act are classical terms of Kenneth Burke (Burke 1953). (back)

9. On rhetoric as a game see Huizinga 1964, 146-157. (back)

10. For a detailed description and analysis of this practice, see Eliade 1969, 207-216. (back)

11. Among the recently published books on the subject of rhetoric and truth, one of the most interesting is Wouter H. Slob's *Dialogical Rhetoric: An Essay on Truth and Normativity after Postmodernism*. The author, a Protestant minister, theologian and student of culture at Groningen University in Holland, deals with the problem of the loss of truth in the normative aspect, and examines the possibility of re-establishing

it through what he calls “dialogical rhetoric,” as a replacement for dialectic rhetoric. He claims that he does not mean to negate the latter, but only to fully develop its main idea. The truth will not be revealed in any kind of mysterious way “at the end of the day,” but will exist within the polemic itself, and hence there is some point for developing arguments for discussion, refutation and reasoning (Slob 2002, 175). (back)

12. See, for example: Habermas 1962, Sennett 1974. For Gans, the “public” has the constitutive, not the contextual, meaning (see Gans 1981, 126 ff.). (back)

13. The theory of autopoesis is a biological-cognitive theory, which studies nature and man for the aim of providing an answer to the question, what is life. According to this theory, which draws upon contemporary theories of life as well as ancient philosophies, a living system is every autopoetic system, namely, a closed system that creates its own components and hence grows stronger, develops and reproduces itself, and adapts itself to changing environmental conditions. The idea of self-reproduction is underpinned by the well-known theory of “the machine that reproduces itself” of the American mathematician John von Neumann. To a large extent, the founders of the theory of autopoesis, the Chilean scholars, Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela, based it on the synergetic theory of the German physicist Hermann Haken and on the theory of social systems of the German sociologist Niklas Luhmann (Maturana and Varela 1980). (back)

14. Gans distinguishes between the indicative ostensive (e.g. the cry “Fire!”), which “does not appear to modify the world to which it refers,” and the designative ostensive, analogous to John Austin’s performatives (e.g. the proclamation “I now pronounce you man and wife!”) that “transforms their objects” (Gans 1993, 66). (back)

15. In this view, I can identify myself as an “anthroponomastic realist,” in the terms proposed by Matthew Schneider: “At the core of the anthroponomastic realist’s view, then, lies a conception of the scene of representation—and, by extension, human interaction—as oriented toward the ritualized, sacred center, with proper names deriving their power to manifest essential identity from their status as repetitions of the originary name-of-God” (Schneider 2009). (back)

16. Cited from: Kseniia Svetlova, “The East Bundle,” in “The World Order.” Israeli TV Channel 9, broadcasting on the Internet, http://www.zman.com/video/politics/. (back)

17. Thus, Mashal appropriates, as many others do, the name “Palestine”—the British name for the Land of Israel, the result of the earlier, also well-known, appropriation of the name of the Biblical Philistines. (back)

18. Ernst Robert Curtius' proposal in his *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages* is intended to solve this paradox (Curtius 1953). His idea of topos as fossilized and revived personal experience, based on Jungian individuation of archetypes of the collective unconsciousness, does not connect the question of *why* should and can a topos revive, with the question of the *origin* of the paradox mentioned above. Thus, the origins of both topos and paradox remain in the dark. (back)

19. This issue of rhetoric and violence apparently was born together with rhetoric. We need to stress that we are not referring here to the trivial cases of "the rhetoric of violence" or "rhetorical violence," namely rhetoric that serves violent social bodies, and rhetoric that uses violent terms and images and violent technologies of persuasion. These terms can be found in most critical studies—feminist, post-colonial, post-national. They tend to discern "rhetorical violence" in the subjects of their research. On the other hand, the socialistic and revolutionary discourse is very readily identified as "rhetorical violence." See, for example, Cobb 2006 (on violence against homosexuals); Rowlett 1996 (on the violence of nationalism and of identity shaping). (back)

20. Cf. Meeker 1998/99; Gans 2011, 155-164. (back)

21. Jürgen Habermas' claims of validity are: normativity, truth, and truthfulness (sincerity) (Habermas 1984, 90-100). (back)

22. See, for example, the speech of Mahmoud Abbas (Abu Mazen) in the UN, September 23, 2011. (back)

23. Alexei Losev's shortest definition for the concept of myth is "a developed magic name" (Losev 2003, 185-186). (back)

24. Bryan Crable shows that the formative element in Kenneth Burke's famous book *A Rhetoric of Motives* is the irrevocable distance between speaker and listener. Although this element is not entirely clear, only based on it can Burke speak about the rhetorical act as an "eternal plea" that is never fulfilled (Crable 2009). (back)

25. Kevin McClure applies Burke's concept of identification to narratology and establishes the concept of "narrative identification" as stemming from Burke's own approach and as describing the rhetorical processes at the core of the narrative (McClure 2009). (back)

26. See also on the struggle for the right of firstness in the monotheistic religions, with regard to the Holocaust, in postmodernism, and concerning 9/11 and *jihad* in our days, in Gans 2007, 41-53. For this issue in connection with the white guilt problem see: Gans 2005. (back)

27. See, for example this quotation from the UN speech of Mahmoud Abbas (September 23, 2011): “We entered those negotiations with open hearts and attentive ears and sincere intentions, and we were ready with our documents, papers and proposals. But these negotiations broke down just weeks after their launch. . . . We positively considered the various ideas and proposals and initiatives presented from many countries and parties. But all of these sincere efforts and endeavors undertaken by international parties were repeatedly smashed against a rock by the positions of the Israeli government, which quickly dashed the hopes raised by the launch of negotiations last September.”

As the whole speech unrolls the well-known Palestinian narrative (1) against the other, presented by the speaker as the Israeli narrative (2), the quoted sentences point to the insincerity of the Israeli government, its infidelity to the “hopes,” while at the background the question remains about the inconsistency of the speaker’s discourse: why all these “various ideas and proposals and initiatives presented from many countries and parties” were initially necessary at all (3); and so the conflict moves from the plane of reality, which cannot be changed by this speech (and the speaker knows it), to the plane of the names and their meaning appropriation: the right to determine the meaning of the words, such as hope, sincerity, peace, law, aggression, race (see also the continuation of the speech) that belong to “us”—the sincere, open-hearted, and “open-headed” people. (back)